

**THE BLACK  
POODLE, AND  
OTHER TALES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649149322

The black poodle, and other tales by F. Anstey

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**F. ANSTEY**

**THE BLACK  
POODLE, AND  
OTHER TALES**



# THE BLACK POODLE

*AND OTHER TALES*

BY

F. ANSTEY

AUTHOR OF 'VICE VERSÀ' ETC.



LONDON  
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

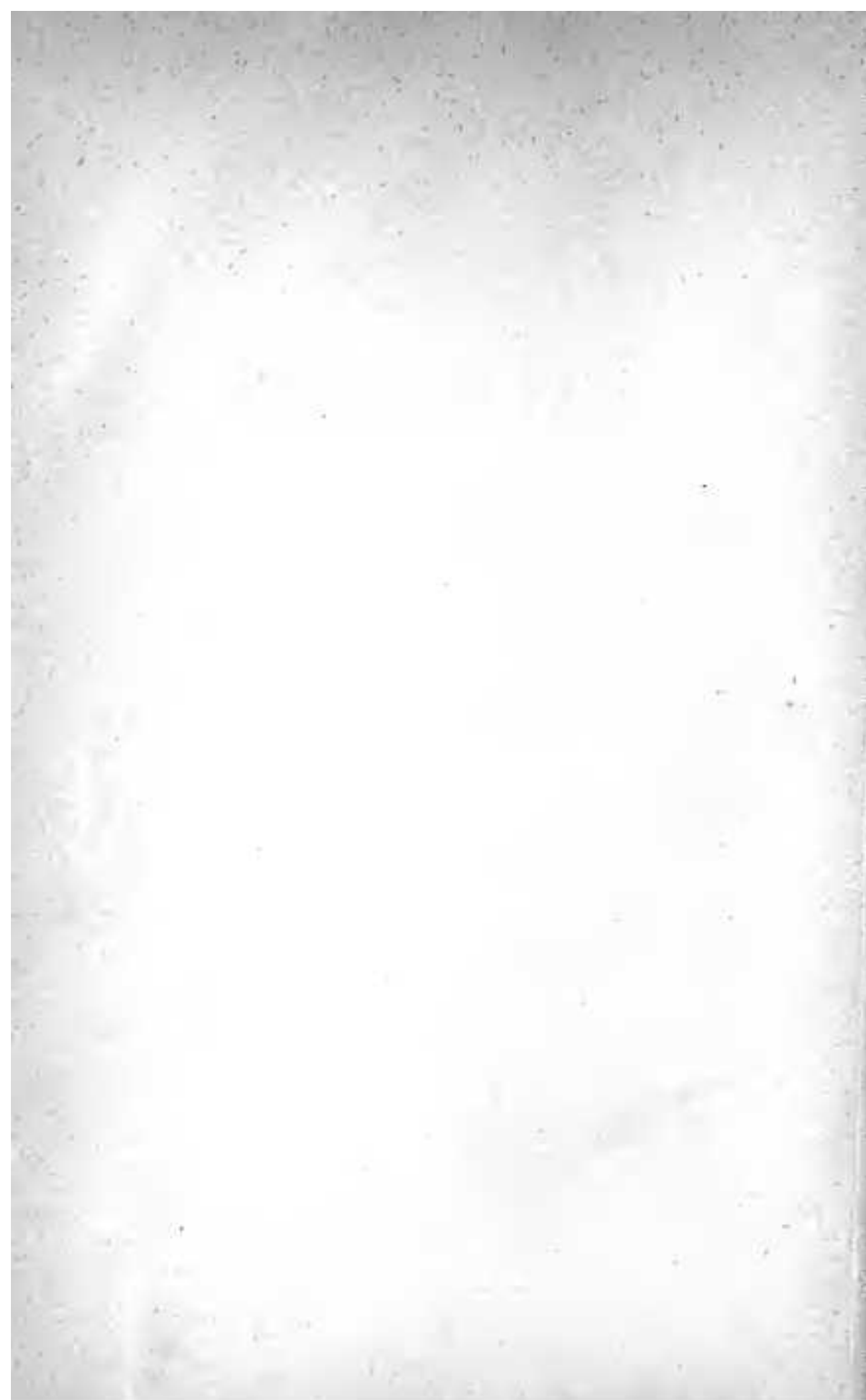
1884

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## PREFACE.

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THE AUTHOR begs to state that the stories which are collected in this volume made their first appearance in 'Belgravia,' the 'Cornhill Magazine,' the 'Graphic,' 'Longman's Magazine,' 'Mirth,' and 'Temple Bar' respectively, and he takes this opportunity of expressing his thanks to those Editors to whose courtesy he is indebted for permission to reprint them.



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*FRONTISPIECE.*

\* IT'S MY BINGO, FOR ALL THAT !

*THE BLACK POODLE.*



**I**HAVE set myself the task of relating in the course of this story, without suppressing or altering a single detail, the most painful and humiliating episode in my life.

I do this, not because it will give me the least pleasure, but simply because it affords me an opportunity of extenuating myself which has hitherto been wholly denied to me.

As a general rule I am quite aware that to publish a lengthy explanation of one's conduct in any questionable transaction is not the best means of recovering a lost reputation ; but in my own case there is one to whom I shall never more be permitted to justify myself by word of mouth—even if I found myself able to attempt it. And as she could not possibly think worse of me than she does at present, I write this, knowing it can do me no harm, and faintly hoping that it may come to her notice and suggest a doubt whether I am quite so unscrupulous a villain, so consummate a hypocrite, as I have been forced to appear in her eyes.

The bare chance of such a result makes me perfectly indifferent to all else : I cheerfully expose to the derision of the whole reading world the story of my weakness and my shame, since by doing so I may possibly rehabilitate myself somewhat in the good opinion of one person.

Having said so much, I will begin my confession without further delay :—

My name is Algernon Weatherhead, and I may add that I am in one of the Government departments ; that I am an only son, and live at home with my mother.

We had had a house at Hammersmith until just before the period covered by this history, when, our lease expiring, my mother decided that my health required country air at the close of the day, and so we